Star Fox 64

Star Fox 64,[a] known in Australia and Europe as ***Lylat Wars***, is a 3D scrolling shooter game themed around aircraft combat for the Nintendo 64 video game console. It is a reboot of the original *Star Fox*,[2] and the only game in the *Star Fox* series to be released on the Nintendo 64. An autostereoscopic remake, titled *Star Fox 64 3D*, was released for the Nintendo 3DS in 2011.

Star Fox 64 was the first Nintendo 64 game to have included support for the Rumble Pak, with which it initially came bundled.[3] The game has sold over 4 million copies since its release, making it one of the best-selling games on the system. The game received critical acclaim for its precise controls, multiplayer modes, voice acting and use of multiple gameplay paths. It has been deemed by many critics and gamers to be one of the best games ever made

Star Fox 64	
North American Nintendo 64 cover art	
Developer(s)	Nintendo EAD
Publisher(s)	Nintendo
Director(s)	Takao Shimizu
Producer(s)	Shigeru Miyamoto
Designer(s)	Shigeru Miyamoto[1]
Programmer(s)	Kazuaki Morita🖉
Artist(s)	Takaya Imamura
Writer(s)	Mitsuhiro Takano
Composer(s)	Hajime Wakai Koji Kondo
Series	*Star Fox*
Platform(s)	Nintendo 64, iQue Player
Release	**Nintendo 64** JP: April 27, 1997 NA: June 30, 1997 PAL: October 4, 1997 **iQue Player** CHN: November 2003
Genre(s)	Rail/scrolling shooter
Mode(s)	Single-player, multiplayer

Contents

Gameplay

Star Fox 64 is a 3D scrolling shooter game in which the player controls one of the vehicles piloted by Fox McCloud, usually an Arwing. Most of the game takes place in "Corridor Mode", which forces Fox's vehicle down a fixed path straight forward through the environment. The player can maneuver somewhat around the path and slow their vehicle temporarily, but cannot truly stop or change direction. Some stages of the game, including most boss fights, take place in "All-Range Mode" by comparison (as does Multi-Player Mode). In this variant the player can move freely within the confines of a large arena to engage in combat.[4]

In Corridor Mode, the player's vehicle can be maneuvered around the screen to dodge obstacles and shoot incoming enemies with laser cannons, and can also perform a somersault to get behind enemies or dodge projectiles. The Arwing is also capable of deflecting enemy fire while performing a spinning maneuver called a "barrel roll" (actually an aileron roll in real life aviation terms).[4] The

Arwing and Landmaster can charge up their laser cannons to unleash a powerful lock-on laser.[5] The Arwing can perform one new maneuver in All-Range Mode: an Immelmann up-and-over to change direction. In-game, this is called a U-turn.

Throughout the game, the player can fly or drive through power-ups to collect them. These include rings that charge up the vehicle's shields, Smart Bombs, laser upgrades, wing repairs, and extra lives. Most stages also contain at least three gold rings - collecting three of these increases the vehicle's maximum shield level. If the player successfully collects three additional gold rings in the same stage, an extra life is awarded. Aside from the maximum shield boost, all power-ups carry over to the next stage. If the player runs out of lives, the game is over

Returning from the original *Star Fox* are wingmen that fly beside the player in Arwings and are sometimes pursued into the player's field of view by enemies. If the player fails to defeat the enemies chasing a wingman, that wingman may be forced to retreat to the mothership *Great Fox* for repairs. The wingman will then be unavailable throughout the next stage. Each wingman provides a different form of assistance to the player: Slippy Toad scans boss enemies and displays their shields on the player's screen, Peppy Hare provides gameplay advice, and Falco Lombardi occasionally locates alternate routes through stages.[5] Some stages also feature appearances from supporting characters that assist the team.[4]

Star Fox 64 features a branching level system, in which more difficult paths are unlocked by completing certain objectives such as defeating a specific boss or completing the stage within a time limit.[4] All of the game's possible routes start at Corneria, eventually put the player in contact with the Star Wolf Team, and end in a confrontation with Andross.

To add replay challenge, the game features awardable medals, which are earned by accomplishing a mission with all wingmen intact and having achieved a certain hit total.[4] These totals are often a high percentage of the total enemies on the stage, leaving little room for error. Obtaining medals results in unlocking bonus features, such as a sound test and the ability to use the Landmaster tank and fight on foot in multiplayer mode. Acquiring all medals unlocks a new *Expert* mode in which there are more enemies per level, the player's Arwing takes more damage (a single direct collision with solid obstacles will destroy one of the Arwing's wings and rid the player of any laser upgrades), and Fox wears sunglasses like his father James. Acquiring all medals on Expert Mode unlocks a new title screen for the game; a medal on Venom in Expert Mode allows players to use the Star Fox team as foot soldiers in multiplayer mode.

Multiplayer

Star Fox 64 features multiplayer support for up to four players simultaneously.[4] At first users can only play using the Arwing spaceship, but by earning certain medals in Story Mode, players can unlock the Landmaster tank, as well as the option to fight on foot as one of the four members of Star Fox equipped with a bazooka. Multiplayer is the only place where players can use a Landmaster with upgraded lasers.

There are three modes of multiplayer play: a "point match" in which the player must shoot down an opponent a certain number of times, a "battle royal" in which the last player shot down wins, and a time trial to destroy enemy fighters.[5]

Vehicles

The Arwing is the primary craft used by the Star Fox team. The Arwing can use its boost meter to perform four special moves to avoid collisions and get the drop on pursuers: boost, brake, the U-turn, and the aforementioned somersault.

A tank-like vehicle called the Landmaster is used for two levels in the game, Macbeth and Titania. Like the Arwing, the Landmaster can boost and brake but it cannot somersault. It can perform a barrel roll, but since it lacks an Arwing's force field, the Landmaster's barrel roll does not reflect enemy fire. Instead, the barrel roll is used to quickly move across the screen. The Landmaster can also hover a short while.

The Blue-Marine, a submarine designed by Slippy Toad, is available solely on the water planet Aquas. The Blue-Marine can upgrade its twin lasers, but it cannot make use of Smart Bombs. It makes up for this with an unlimited supply of torpedoes which not only damage enemies but also produce bright bursts of light, allowing the player to see in the ocean depths. The torpedoes can also lock-

on to enemies just as the charged up lasers can in the other vehicles. The submersible also has a shot-deflecting barrel roll in addition to boost and brake capabilities.

The Landmaster in-game

Plot

Characters

The game's protagonist and playable character is Fox McCloud, a red fox and leader of the Star Fox team, who defends the Lylat system. His father, James, was part of the original Star Fox team, who was killed by Andross before the start of the game. Andross, a scientist from Corneria who was exiled to Venom after he nearly destroyed the planet, is the main antagonist of the game.

The Star Fox team is a group of mercenaries consisting of: Peppy Hare, a rabbit and member of the original Star Fox team; Slippy Toad, a frog and the mechanical and energetic expert of the team; and Falco Lombardi, a falcon who is cocky but an excellent fighter and is Fox's best friend. Helping the Star Fox team on their quest to defeat Andross are: General Pepper, a dog and leader of a militia force in Corneria; Bill Grey, a bulldog friend of Fox and commander of the Bulldog and Husky units; Katt Monroe, a friend and former fellow gang member of Falco; and ROB 64 (NUS64 in the Japanese version), a robot piloting the *Great Fox*, Star Fox's headquarters, who gives them support along their quest.

Andross' henchmen include the Star Wolf mercenary team, consisting of: Wolf O'Donnell; Leon Powalski; Pigma Dengar, a former member of the Star Fox team with James McCloud; and Andrew Oikonny, Andross's nephew.

Story

Star Fox 64 is set on a group of planets in the Lylat system. Ingenious scientist Andross, a native of the fourth planet Corneria, is driven to madness and nearly destroys the planet using biological weapons. General Pepper exiles Andross to the remote planet Venom. Five years later, Pepper detects suspicious activity on Venom.[6] Pepper hires the Star Fox team (including James McCloud, Peppy Hare and Pigma Dengar) to investigate. After Pigma betrays the team and Andross captures James, Peppy escapes from Venom and informs Fox McCloud about James' fate.

A few more years later, Andross launches an attack across the Lylat system. Defending Corneria, Pepper summons the new Star Fox team, now consisting of Fox, Peppy, Falco Lombardi and Slippy Toad.[7] While traveling through several planets, the team battles with several of Andross' henchmen, including the rival mercenaries, Star Wolf. The game's ending differs depending on which path the player took, if Venom is approached from the Easy Route, Fox defeats Andross, unaware that it is actually a robotic version of himself and destroys it, leaving Andross drifting in the Lylat System.[8] If Venom is approached from the Hard Route, Fox battles Andross, in the process revealing Andross' true form as that of a floating brain,[9] Fox defeats Andross, who attempts to finish Fox off before he is destroyed. James appears and leads Fox out from Venom. After James' disappearance, Star Fox returns to Corneria for a victory celebration. Pepper offers Fox the opportunity to join the Cornerian Army, but he declines it on his behalf for the team.[10] The game ends with the *Great Fox* and the Star Fox team flying off in their Arwings into the skies.[11]

In a post credits scene, Pepper receives a bill from Star Fox presenting the number of enemies killed and multiplies it by 64, resulting in the amount of money due. If the price is between $50,000 and $69,999 (between 781 and 1,093 enemies killed) he will say, "This is one steep bill....but it's worth it." If the price is over $70,000 (1,094 or more), he says "What?!" At this point, the player presses a button to stamp the bill, thus bringing the player back to the main menu.

Development

The unreleased original second game in the *Star Fox* series, titled *Star Fox 2*, was developed nearly to completion for the Super Nintendo Entertainment System. It was featured in several gaming magazines such as *Nintendo Power*, but ultimately series creator Shigeru Miyamoto wanted to move the title to the more powerful Nintendo 64 system. Realizing how much of an improvement he could make over the two Super NES games, Miyamoto cancelled *Star Fox 2* in favor of a remake combining elements of the previous games. Miyamoto said: "All-Range Mode, Multi-Player Mode and the Star Wolf scenario all came from *Star Fox 2*."[2]

Shigeru Miyamoto is a fan of English puppet dramas, such as *Thunderbirds*. Consequently, when developing the animation sequences for *Star Fox 64*, the staff made the characters' mouths pop open and closed like mouths of puppets. This reduced the amount of animation work put into the series.[12]

According to IGN, the game cartridge contains approximately four megabytes of speech data, sampled at 8 kHz, compressed at a ratio of approximately 1:3 or 1:4.[13]

The game was known as *Lylat Wars* in some territories because Nintendo considered that "Star Fox" sounded too similar to the name of the German company "StarVox", and were concerned that a legal dispute over the name might delay the release of the game.[14]

Promotion

Nintendo Power subscribers received a promotional video prior to *Star Fox 64*'s release (the same tactic was used to promote *Donkey Kong Country* as well as *Diddy Kong Racing*, *Banjo-Kazooie*, and *Hey You, Pikachu!* for the N64) that advertised the game's cinematic presentation, as well as new features like the Rumble Pak and voice acting. It revolves around two agents of Sega and Sony (who, at the time, were Nintendo's biggest competitors) kidnapping Nintendo employees and forcing them to reveal information about the upcoming *Star Fox* title by "torturing" a Mario doll.

Reception and legacy

Star Fox 64 received critical acclaim and is one of the top-selling games of 1997, second to *Mario Kart 64*.[26] Reviews hailed the level branching system, particularly its hinging on player performance and uncovering of secrets rather than simple path selection, saying it greatly enhances the challenge offered by the game.[17][19][20][25] Most also found that the multiplayer modes were an ample source of replay value,[19][20][25][27] with *Next Generation* in particular stating they "give *StarFox 64* a boost over other shooters."[25] However, Crispin Boyer of *Electronic Gaming Monthly* considered them a waste, contending that the split screen makes targets too small to pinpoint.[17] The game's voice clips were widely complimented, not for the quality of the acting, but for the unprecedented quantity of clips for a cartridge game.[17][19][20][25][27] Critics also applauded the precise analog control,[17][19][20][27] boss designs,[17][20][25] rumble pak implementation,[17][19][20][25][27] and cinematic cutscenes.[19][20][25] *GamePro*, which gave the game a perfect 5.0 out of 5 in all four categories, elaborated, "The analog joystick seriously kicks it here with its best

Reception	
Aggregate scores	
Aggregator	**Score**
GameRankings	89.01%[23]
Metacritic	88/100[24]
Review scores	
Publication	**Score**
AllGame	★★★★★[15]
Edge	9/10[16]
EGM	9.125/10[17]
Famitsu	36/40[18]
GameSpot	8.3/10[19]
IGN	8.7/10[20]
Nintendo Life	9/10[22]
Nintendo Power	4.325/5[21]
Next Generation	★★★★★[25]

performance to date, demonstrating impressively crisp response that enables you to pull the tight, white-knuckle moves you need to survive. The Rumble Pak teams up with the solid controls and scores as an all-time great add-on.[27]

The most common criticism was that *Star Fox 64* was not as much of a leap over the original *Star Fox* as *Super Mario 64* was over previous Mario games, in particular that the gameplay, while offering a bit more freedom to roam, was still on rails.[17][20][25][27] This perceived shortcoming did little to dull critics' response to the game, however. *GameSpot* reviewer Glenn Rubenstein declared *Star Fox 64* "an instant classic" and "a pleasure to look at".[19] *EGM* gave it their "Game of the Month" award, with Dan Hsu calling it "a shooting fan's dream come true" and Shawn Smith "almost as good as Mario 64."[17] IGN reviewer Doug Perry said it "demonstrates that shooters are more alive now than ever."[20]

In the first five days of the game's U.S. launch, more than 300,000 copies were sold, surpassing the record previously held by *Mario Kart 64* and *Super Mario 64*.[28] Sales were considerably less in Japan, where it sold 75,595 copies during the first week of sale.[29] The game also took the #73 spot in *Nintendo Power's* "Top 200 Nintendo Games Ever".[30]

The *GameSpot* review of the Wii Virtual Console version bestows a (7.6/10), praising its simple, enjoyable shooting gameplay, and lots of voice acting. The review says the game is nice to look at regardless of its graphic age, with added replay value in finding hidden paths, but found the lack of rumble support "alarming", especially since it is the first game to support the Rumble Pak.[31]

Star Fox 64 is listed as the 45th greatest game of all time by Guinness World Records Gamer's Edition in 2009.[32]

3DS remake

At the 2010 E3 conference, Nintendo announced a remake of *Star Fox 64* for the Nintendo 3DS, entitled *Star Fox 64 3D*.[33] There was a demo tested the same day at Nintendo E3 2010. The demonstration had controls and character dialogue displayed on the touch screen. Nintendo added a kind of control that makes use of Nintendo 3DS's gyroscope to control Arwing in the space.[34] It supports multiplayer for up to four players via 3DS Download Play; however, the game does not have an online multiplayer mode. In the multiplayer mode, unlike the original version, players use the Arwing solely

The remake uses eight voice tracks in total, as opposed to the original three: Japanese, English, Canadian French, European French, Latin American Spanish, Iberian Spanish, German, and Italian.[35] These tracks are available as per Nintendo's standard regional localizations.

The players are able to use the inner camera to capture the expression of the player during multiplayer mode.[36] It was released on July 14, 2011 in Japan, September 9, 2011 in both Europe and North America, and September 15, 2011 in Australia to generally favorable reviews.[37]

Notes

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External links

- Official website